

The Sino-Soviet Conflict: A Global Perspective. Edited by H.J. Ellison. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982. xxii, 408 pp. Maps, Forward, Introduction, Index.

With the laudable ambition of both exploring the complexities of Sino-Soviet relations and projecting "the likely trends of the 1980s," Herbert Ellison has compiled a wide-ranging, insightful set of essays on Sino-Soviet relations. This refreshingly balanced treatment of each side proceeds from the internal politics, security concerns, and economic circumstances of the USSR and PRC through the international repercussions of their mutual hostility to three summary discussions.

The breadth of coverage, excellence of the index, abundance of footnotes, and critique by Donald Treadgold of Western explanations for the Sino-Soviet conflict make this compilation an excellent introductory work for graduate students. The expertise of the contributors gives rise to numerous insights which specialists will find thought-provoking. Joan Urban's suggestion that Soviet anxiety over Chinese rapprochement with West Europe stemmed not from fear of a China armed with Western weapons so much as from concern that China might encourage Western anti-Sov-

ietism (p. 309) is one example. Another is Dwight D. Eisenhower's argument, based on potential growth rates, that China might be able to approach military parity with the Soviet Union within 20 years (p. 110). Yet for analysts of Sino-Soviet relations frustrated by the mass of currently available descriptive summaries almost untouched by scientific analysis, this highly traditional volume will provide little consolation.

An unimaginative conceptual framework lacking scientific rigor has left the disappointing whole less than the sum of the admittedly stimulating parts. Kenneth Lieberthal's lead article on Chinese domestic politics adds to a summary of his previous writings a set of scenarios for the future of Sino-Soviet relations which warn that close Sino-Western ties may well depend on rapid economic development in China. Seweryn Bialer, in contrast to Lieberthal's factional model, argues from a unitary actor approach that incoming Soviet leaders should logically want better Sino-Soviet relations and, as with Lieberthal, that slow economic growth would very possibly persuade China to go along. Jonathan Pollack's contention that Soviet foreign policy "has alternately flailed, probed, and stood perfectly still, without any internal agreement on...positive goals" (p. 75) suggests that even for the relatively more unified Soviet elite, the unitary actor approach is unlikely to reveal all the motivations for Soviet attitudes toward China in the near future. (Fedor Burlatskiy's various critiques of Maoism, which can be read as attacks on Stalinist tendencies in Brezhnev's Russia come to mind in this regard.) Paul Borsuk's opinion that Soviet elite perceptions of China are rigid and unrealistic also calls into question Bialer's implication that the post-Brezhnev leadership will be logical.

The inclusion of such divergent views is stimulating, but the reader must search diligently to locate them because the type of introduction listing key hypotheses which a student trained in the behavioral era hopes for was not included. One is in no way belittling the value of contrasting views lucidly presented in asking for a list of hypotheses accompanied by explicit assumptions underlying them and by

definition of what specific potential occurrences could be considered to falsify or confirm those hypotheses. A concluding chapter evaluating the various contributors' efforts in this regard would also be of value.

If such a systematic effort at organizing the book had been made, explanatory variables might have been more thoroughly examined and their significance more clearly ranked. One possible reason for Chinese verbal hostility toward the USSR which was totally ignored by this volume, for example, is China's desire to enhance its global status. It cannot compete economically or militarily with the super-powers, but China can, by leading a verbal crusade (read "united front") against hegemony or imperialism as the case may be, cheaply attain a certain global status. However individual specialists may wish to rank this variable in comparison with ideological discord, security concerns, idiosyncratic factors, or the need for Western technology, a 400-page study of Sino-Soviet relations should certainly not have ignored it. Does the title, Sino-Soviet Conflict (rather than the neutral "relations"), indicate that hostility is assumed? As individual contributors repeatedly pointed out, to take Sino-Soviet hostility as a given is very risky.

Harry Gelman's first-rate concluding overview of Sino-Soviet relations underlines the danger of making any assumptions about this relationship because of three areas of uncertainty: Chinese political stability, American foreign policy consistency, and the contradiction between Chinese hostility toward the USSR and its weakness. Gelman's conclusion might have been the best point at which to start this book, for the field of Sino-Soviet studies needs a methodical exploration of the interplay among these three areas of uncertainty and a fourth - the possibility of instability in a Soviet Union faced with managing the replacement of the ruling generation in a period of severe foreign policy challenges and domestic economic constraints.

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